

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraph [023] as follows:

During the manufacture of the active ingredient matrix according to the invention it has been found that the handling of the suspension of collagen fibrils, which are largely present in isolated form in the suspension, can be significantly simplified if the suspension has a pH-value of  $> 3.5$  to  $< 4.8$ . In this pH range, the collagen suspension is pourable and makes it possible, following the addition of the active ingredients, to homogeneously distribute the same in the suspension, so that they are present in the finished matrix in homogeneous form, embedded between the collagen fibrils. It is fundamentally possible to set the suitable pH-value following the mechanical separation into fibres by adding acid or base. However, it is advantageous for the method and product, to use a preferred procedure in which the acid concentration is so set during the swelling process that following the rinsing of the swollen collagen portions and during the subsequent separation into fibres of the portions into collagen fibrils, a suspension is obtained where said pH-range automatically occurs. A pH-range between 4.0 and 4.5 is preferred. As the pH-range is adjustable by choosing the concentration of the organic acid combined with the number of rinsing operations and optionally the rinsing liquid quantity, there are sufficient variation possibilities for obtaining the desired result. Normally at least

two rinsing operations and in particular at least five such operations are performed. In a rinsing cycle the rinsing water is removed after each rinsing operation. Generally rinsing or washing takes place with demineralized water. If the active ingredient is added in aqueous medium, e.g. in a suspension, then the latter preferably has roughly the same pH-value in order to avoid pH-shifts as a result of active ingredient addition. Due to the fact that demineralized water is used during rinsing or washing and there is no need for pH-correction after rinsing, the introduction of salts into the active ingredient matrix is avoided, so that the latter is substantially salt-free, which is desirable in many cases. Thus, apart from the collagen fibrils as the carrier structure and the at least one active ingredient, the active ingredient matrix is substantially free from further constituents as well as being substantially free from salt.